DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 022 206 CG 002 698

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COLLEGE STUDENT SUBCULTURES: IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION.

American Personnel and Guidance Association, Washington, D.C.

Pub Date Apr 68

Note-9p.; Speech presented at the American Personnel and Guidance Association Convention, Detroit, Michigan, April 7-11, 1968.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.44

Descriptors-COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION, *COLLEGE STUDENTS, *PERSONAL VALUES, RESEARCH, SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT, *STUDENT SUBCULTURES

In the typology of college student subcultures developed by Clark and Trow, four subcultures emerge: (1) the academic, (2) the collegiate, (3) the nonconformist, and (4) the vocation. This study investigated selected psychosocial factors in the four subcultures. The Study of Values and The College Student Questionnaire were administered to 200 male undergraduates, 50 identified as belonging to each subculture. Especially marked differences were found on aesthetic, economic, and social values, and on cultural sophistication, satisfaction with administration, extracurricular involvement, academic aptitude, and liberalism. Implications of this study for educational programs and administrative practices are listed. (NS)

COLLEGE STUDENT SUBCULTURES: IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDENT PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

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Introduction

For counselors and administrators in institutions of higher education achieving some understanding of students -- some conceptualization of how they adapt to the environmental press is essential. Patterns of adaptation can help to "make sense" out of the myriad of differing personalities in the student body. Somehow we have to cast our nomological net and understand our catch. The Clark - Trow typology which dichotomizes students on two dimensions -- identification with the institution and commitment to ideas -- is a most meaningful means of structuring our thinking about and achieving understanding of students.

The approach used in this study was to investigate the interaction of personal and social factors within the social system of the university. The personal attributes studied included selected attitudes and values, academic aptitude and achievement, and socioeconomic status.

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Purpose

Rather than being a homogeneous mass, college students adopt certain basic orientations toward higher education. The purpose of this study was to achieve better understanding of these behavioral patterns. More specifically, the question posed was: Do members of four subcultures of college students differ significantly on selected psychosocial factors?

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Theoretical Framework

The use of a theoretical model based on values which are critical to the larger social system (the university) has a number of advantages. It suggests variables and

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research objectives which are meaningful; it provides a framework in which results may be more easily interpreted; and it helps make research cumulative.

Clark and Trow have developed a typology of college student subcultures. In this model the two differentialing criteria are intellectual commitment and identification with the institution. From this, four subcultures emerge: the academic, the collegiate, the nonconformist, and the vocational.

The identifiable forms which these patterns assume on the campus are student peer groups.

Hypotheses

Using the "know groups" method of investigation allowed directional stating of the hypotheses. The decision to accept or reject the hypotheses was based on the value of a one-tailed "t" test at the .05 level. The generalized null hypothesis stated that there were no significant differences among the four subgroups on the selected variables.

The Sample and Sampling Methodology

Because of the nature of the study, the sampling procedures varied from group to group. Approximately one year was spent in an informal field study to find behavioral and organizational patterns which would serve as prototypes of the Clark and Trow subcultures. Common criteria adhered to in defining group membership were that the individual must perceive himself as such and that his participation in the group must be voluntary.

The groups selected for the study were those judged a priori -- on the basis of observations of patterns of behavior, impressions gained from reading organizational materials, and interview findings -- to be representative of the four theoretical subcultures.

The sample consisted of 200 men undergraduates of sophomore standing or above, 50 in each group. Table I shows selection criteria and groups chosen.

TABLE I

SAMPLE SELECTION

Subculture	Sample Selection	Group	Sampling Method
Academic	A group committed to learning through prescribed institutional means.	Honors Program enrolees	Entire population
Collegiate	Emphasis on a "well-rounded" approach to higher education with an organizational program which consists primarily of social activities; a group which cooperates with institutional means of control and participates in institutional activity programs.	Fraternity members	Random
Nonconformist	A group characterized by searching and innovation which for the most part take the form of activities independent of or at least outside of university structures. These activities often have to do with off-campus issues such as civil rights and other social reforms. Sometimes this group advocates and agitates for radical reform within the university itself.	"Students for a Democratic Society" members and sympathizers plus selected members of a dissident residence hall group	"Snowball"
Vocational	A group characterized by single-minded preoccupation with curricular requirements leading to a degree and a job combined with a detachment from participation in student activities sponsored by the institution.	Technical Education majors	Members of four randomly selected Technical Education classes

The Instruments and the Variables

The instruments used were the Study of Values and The College Student Questionnaire, Part II. In addition, ACT scores and GPA were taken from student records and a socioeconomic status scale was constructed. The 19 measures included in the study were empirically divided into nine nomological categories as follows:

1. Educational Orientation (Theoretical and Aesthetic Values and Cultural Sophistication)
2. Identification (Satisfaction with Faculty, Administration, Student, Major, and Extracurricular Involvement)
3. Independence (Peer and Family)
4. Academic ability and achievement
5. Economic Value
6. Political Value
7. Socioeconomic Status (index of father's educational and occupational level)
8. Study Habits
9. Social Orientation (Liberalism, Social Conscience, and Social Value)

Statistical Treatment

The analysis of variance technique was used to make group comparisons. Where significant differences were found among the groups, one-tailed "t" tests were utilized to find the sources of the differences and whether differences were significant.

Findings

The "t" tests yielded 72 pairs of values as follows: 55 significant differences among the groups and 17 non-significant differences. Especially marked differences were found on Aesthetic, Economic, and Social Values, and on Cultural Sophistication, Satisfaction with Administration, Extracurricular Involvement, Academic Aptitude, and Liberalism.

Results with particular implications for administrative practice are shown in Table II.

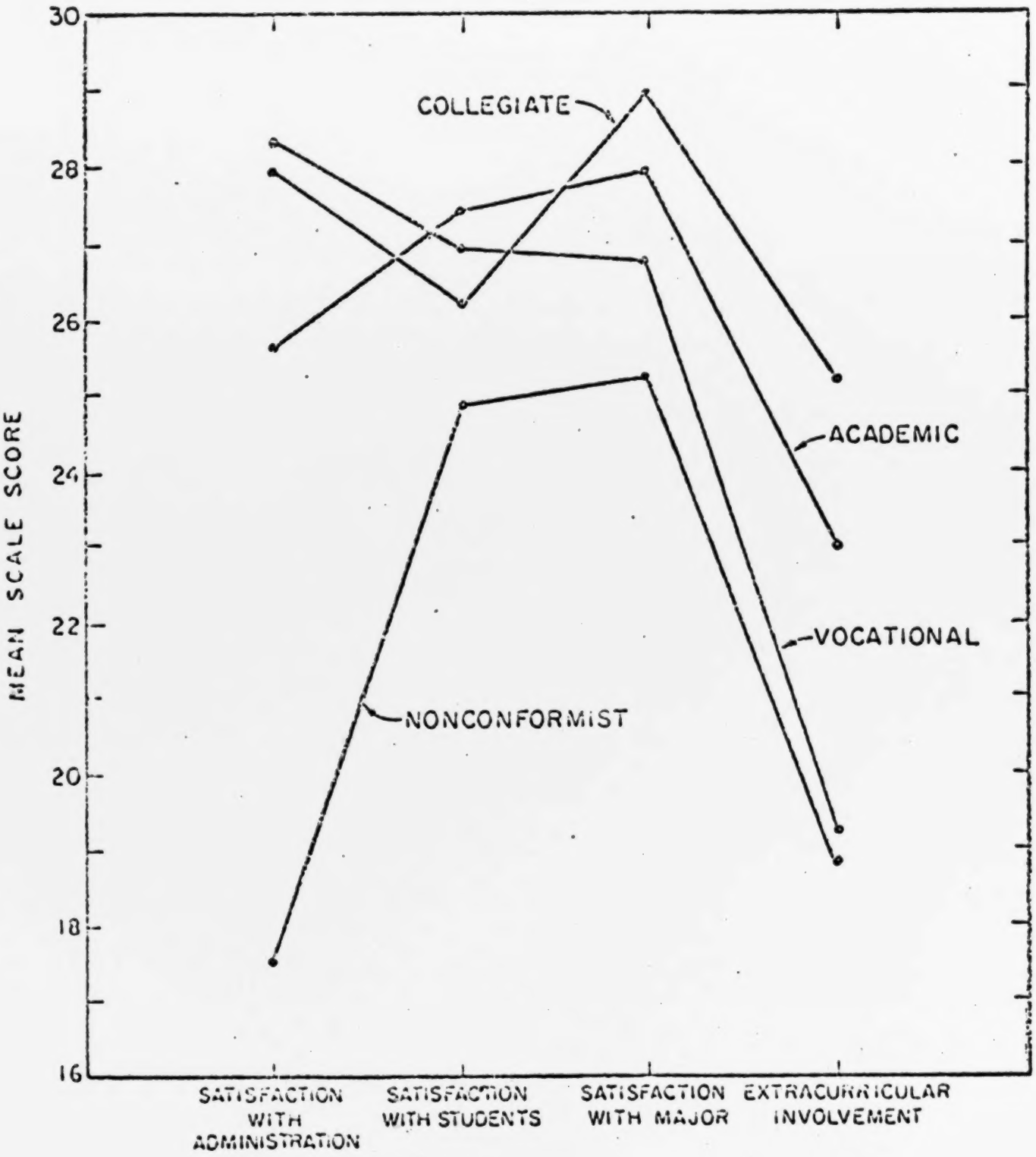
TABLE II

RESULTS OF "t" TESTS OF HYPOTHESIZED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEANS OF GROUPS ON SELECTED MEASURES

Variable and Groups	Means	Hypothesized Differences	"t"
Satisfaction with Administration			
Academic	25.70	Academic > Nonconformist	8.23**
Collegiate	27.98	Academic > Vocational	- 2.61
Nonconformist	17.50	Collegiate > Nonconformist	12.68**
Vocational	28.22	Collegiate > Vocational	- 0.30
Extracurricular Involvement			
Academic	23.00	Academic > Nonconformist	3.58**
Collegiate	25.20	Academic > Vocational	3.71**
Nonconformist	18.80	Collegiate > Nonconformist	6.62**
Vocational	19.22	Collegiate > Vocational	7.75**
Peer Independence			
Academic	26.58	Academic > Collegiate	5.07**
Collegiate	22.54	Academic > Vocational	2.31*
Nonconformist	27.22	Nonconformist > Collegiate	5.50**
Vocational	24.78	Nonconformist > Vocational	2.93**
Economic Value			
Academic	35.72	Collegiate > Academic	6.67**
Collegiate	46.56	Vocational > Academic	6.09**
Nonconformist	29.34	Collegiate > Nonconformist	9.09**
Vocational	45.32	Vocational > Nonconformist	8.63**
Political Value			
Academic	41.82	Collegiate > Academic	3.00**
Collegiate	46.19	Collegiate > Vocational	4.97**
Nonconformist	39.01	Nonconformist > Academic	- 1.95
Vocational	40.00	Nonconformist > Vocational	- 0.81
Liberalism			
Academic	26.80	Academic > Collegiate	3.79**
Collegiate	23.54	Academic > Vocational	5.87**
Nonconformist	32.50	Nonconformist > Collegiate	9.05**
Vocational	21.38	Nonconformist > Vocational	10.63**
Social Value			
Academic	36.47	Academic > Collegiate	2.61**
Collegiate	32.20	Academic > Vocational	1.12
Nonconformist	43.83	Nonconformist > Collegiate	6.52**
Vocational	34.75	Nonconformist > Vocational	5.37**

* Significant at the .05 level of confidence.
** Significant at the .01 level of confidence.
> Greater than.
- Opposite direction.

The figure below is a graphic presentation of the identification or ego-involvement findings.



Conclusions and Implications

This study showed that the Clark - Trow typology provides a model for meaningful study of relationships of the characteristics of student subgroups. It was demonstrated that students assigned to the subgroups on the basis of observations and theory did differ in values, attitudes, and other personal characteristics. They differ in their approach to education and they differ in their social orientations.

By focusing on the interaction of personality systems (values, attitudes, traits) with social systems (subgroups and the University system), this study was an attempt at a somewhat different research approach. If behavior is a function of personality and environment, then such behavior can best be studied by taking into account both of these factors instead of studying them in isolation.

This study of the personal and social correlates of student subcultures hopefully provided a frame of reference which will contribute to a better understanding of college students and the differing ways they adapt to higher education. The findings of this study have implications for educational theory and practice, and for further research. A number of implications for administrative practice and for curricular and extracurricular programs will be pointed out.

The conflict between the Nonconformists and the system often results from divergent views concerning what the goals are or ought to be. A number of the findings reported imply the need for a re-evaluation of objectives of the system. Hopefully broader outcomes than grades and degrees will be sought. If a large segment of students genuinely committed to values related to system goals appear to be somewhat alienated from and tend to rebel against that system, this should be cause for concern. Particularly is this true when the most satisfied tend to be those with a practical, utilitarian orientation. All of this is highly suggestive of a need to re-examine goals and practices.

Program and Practice. The following is a list of some of the kinds of implications for educational programs and practices which can be derived from this study.

1. The great differences shown among students in a single institution point up the need for flexible, varied programs both curricular and extracurricular.
2. There is an apparent need both in the curriculum and the extracurriculum for the provision of opportunities to develop artistic and intellectual appreciations and interests.
3. The extracurriculum is apparently not meeting the needs of the Nonconformist and Vocational subcultures. Means need to be sought to appeal to these groups without lowering the quality of the programs or disrupting the system.
4. Although there are significant differences among the groups on grade point average, the mean values are well above the 2.0 or "gentleman's C" level. This indicates that studying or judging students on the basis of grades alone can gloss over great variances in other perhaps more critical characteristics.
5. There is an apparent need for curricular and extracurricular programs to encourage social concern and to develop feelings of responsibility to others.
6. A dilemma is presented by the finding that those most rejecting of the University score highest on measures of social orientation. It would seem that this could be a point of congruence of value orientation between the Nonconformists and the University. Perhaps this interest in one's fellow man could evolve into meaningful activity toward common goals. This could be a means of starting to achieve some attitude changes.
7. An evaluation of fraternities seems to indicated. The purpose of the evaluation would be to attempt to assess the contribution of these organizations to the education of their members.

Hopefully this study has made a contribution to the understanding of college students and has shown the great differences that exist among them. It is further hoped that the study has value both for suggesting practical application of the findings and indicating directions for further research into how students approach and adapt to the means and goals of the institutions of higher education which they attend.